



MILK PRODUCERS COUNCIL

"Serving the Dairy Industry for More Than 60 Years"

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January 21, 2013

Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board
Attn: Steve Mayville
3737 Main Street, Suite 500
Riverside, CA 92501

Re: Comments on Tentative R8-2013-0001

Dear Mr. Mayville,

Milk Producers Council (MPC) is a non-profit trade association representing dairy families within the Santa Ana RWQCB jurisdiction. We greatly appreciate the opportunity to comment on the tentative *"General Waste Discharge Requirements for Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (Dairies and Related Facilities) Within the Santa Ana Region"* (hereafter referred to as the "Dairy Permit"). While the number of dairy families operating in the Santa Ana region is quickly declining, we understand the need for a new permit and appreciate the transparency of the RWQCB's permit-writing process.

In general, we believe the RWQCB staff has struck an important balance in this Dairy Permit. While the permit certainly represents significant financial costs and regulatory burdens on the individual families still operating the region, we believe the regulatory requirements and time tables outlined in the Dairy Permit are largely reasonable and achievable.

MPC has a long history of working with the RWQCB in not only crafting previous Dairy Permits, but also in assisting the individual dairy families who are "on-the-ground" and subjected to the requirements included in the Dairy Permit. We believe that intimate knowledge of the real-world impacts these permits have on the dairy families still operating in Southern California gives us a valuable perspective as we evaluate the specific provisions in the tentative Dairy Permit.

Below are some of the concerns about individual provisions in the Dairy Permit. This is not an all-inclusive list, as we are aware there may be plans to hold one or more additional workshops, where additional concerns may surface. MPC is also unaware of any concerns coming from other interested parties, and we'd like to reserve the right to respond to those issues as they become known.

AREAS OF CONCERN FOR MILK PRODUCERS COUNCIL

Page 17, Section E(3): Public review of Engineered Waste Management Plans (EWMP) and Nutrient Management Plans (NMP)

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- **During the December 21, 2012 public workshop held by the Santa Ana RWQCB, a comment from a member of the public suggested that the EWMPs and NMPs that are submitted for approval by the RWQCB be posted online. Milk Producers Council opposes this change in protocol and would oppose changes to the Dairy Permit to effectuate that change. Unlike most businesses, dairy farmers often reside on the dairy farm property they operate. The EWMP and NMP drafted for an individual dairy includes specific information about the property that dairy farmers would prefer to not have posted online. Too much of our personal lives – no matter who you are – is posted online, and MPC believes this is an unnecessary addition to that content. In order to maintain transparency and give the public an opportunity to comment, EWMPs and NMPs are already available to interested parties that wish to view them at the Santa Ana RWQCB office, which MPC continues to support.**

Page B-4, Section X(3)(d): “The Annual Report shall include the following: (d) Sampling and analysis results of any surface discharges and manure nutrient analyses.”

- **Milk Producers Council opposes the submittal of these analyses as part of the annual report. The permit includes language mandating that dairy facilities maintain these records on their facility and available for review upon request (page B-3, Section IX), and the Annual Report already requires the dairy to notify the RWQCB that an analysis has been completed (page B-14). MPC believes these two provisions adequately address the need for a manure nutrient analysis to be done, and therefore opposes the redundant requirement on page B-4, Section X(3)(d).**

Page B-15, Manure Tracking Manifest

- **Milk Producers Council opposes the requirement that “GPS Coordinates” be reported on the manure tracking manifest. Manure is often hauled from the dairies to cropland by third parties, and discussions with some of those third parties indicate that their trucks are not equipped to specify the GPS coordinates for the field utilizing the manure as a soil amendment. MPC suggests that the manure tracking manifest be revised to allow the option of GPS coordinates *or* a detailed description of the location, in order to accommodate the fact that GPS is not universally used in the manure hauling business.**

MPC has also had the opportunity to discuss the tentative Dairy Permit with our colleagues at the Western Riverside County Agriculture Coalition (WRCAC). The dairy representatives serving on WRCAC have done a tremendous job at working towards a solution to some significant local challenges in the San Jacinto region. MPC strongly supports the continuation of those efforts, and we appreciate the consideration that the RWQCB has given to those efforts in structuring the compliance time tables included in the Dairy Permit.

Please feel free to contact me at (909) 628-6018 if you have any questions or concerns about these issues. Again, we greatly appreciate the opportunity to comment, and look forward to the weeks and months ahead as we work with the staff and Board in implementing this new Dairy Permit.

Sincerely,



Robert Vandenheuvel
General Manager